

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities
November 10, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

William Alexion, Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Stephanie Chapple, Katie Collins-Ihrke, Keri Hyde, Colette Jackson, Sharon Kramer, Kathy Land, Mary Manzoni, Kathy McSweeney, Marya Pecukonis, Susan Potts, Dawson Robertson, Linda Schnapp, Ann Scholz, Dana Shourbaji, Stephanie Wallace, Janice Yetter

Guests:

Naysha Conway (Humanim), Thomas Easton (employer, Green Valley Marketplace), Doris Jacobs (Humanim), Barbara Moyer (Project Search, Arc of Howard County), Sue Murray (St. Elizabeth's School, MANSEF), Terri Savage (HCPSS), Tami Shaw (Arc of Howard County)

Absent:

Kathy Conwell, Haywood Evans, Nancy FitzGerald, Chris Glover, Ananta Hejeebu, Michelle Henry, Erica Lewis, Cindy Parr, Laura Parsons, Jemira Sarratt

Meeting called to order at 8:40 am

Welcome and Introductions

Member Updates:

- Commission on Disability Issues held its Awards Ceremony on October 6, 2016; very well attended; Karen Lee (DDA) presented on Employment 1st
- Project Access workshop on December 2 (8:30am-12:30pm) "The Path to Employment for the College Student with Disabilities: Resource Information"
- Will Alexion is employee of the month for Project Search
- Transition Partnership successfully hosted a Social Security workshop in November; very well attended
- HC Department of Community Resources and Services—Office of the Local Children's Board has been created; new administrator will be assigned; a priority is disconnected youth; our commission will be housed under this new office
- Lacy Weaver, officially an HCPSS employee as a paraeducator

Special Welcome of New Member:

Dana Shourbaji, small business owner and operator in Howard County, several students with disabilities employed with ABC Daycare, Inc. (Little Lighthouse)

Approval of Minutes:

Katie Collins-Ihrke made a motion to approve the September 8, 2016, meeting minutes. Ann Scholz seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously

Guest Presentation: Sue Murray, Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF)

Nonpublic schools serve students whose IEPs cannot be successfully implemented in the public schools. Approx. 4200 Maryland students; 90 Howard County students.

91% of students who have exited nonpublic schools are engaged in adult services, employment, or education one year after exit. Survey was facilitated by Johns Hopkins University; very expensive and only done every 5-6 years.

S. Murray works at St. Elizabeth's School. Currently serves 12 students from Howard County. Shared information about St. Elizabeth's services for transitioning students:

- internships; one-day per week; each semester switch job positions; 8-12 different work experiences by the time a student exits high school
- 42 business partners for internship opportunities
- work opportunities within school building begin at age 12
- St. E's has a robust relationship with local community college CCBC—trying to get students industry certified (warehouse forklift training, childcare assistant training, animal care training, ServSafe restaurant training). CCBC teaches classwork at St Elizabeth campus; apply the training in the community at actual facilities/work sites
- St. E's holds transition planning meetings prior to the IEP meeting. Much more effective in addressing/discussing needs and post-school services. Families engaged and students have a 100% placement rate with adult agencies/self-directed services upon graduation.

Guest Presentation: Thomas Easton, Green Market Valley

Green Market Valley provides employment opportunities for enclave students (Tuesday-Friday 12-1:30pm). Work includes: shelving items, bagging groceries, sweeping, collecting shopping baskets, scanning expired goods for HC Food Pantry.

7 individuals work-part time post-enclave; partner with Arc, Abilities, Humanim and others to provide job coaching

T. Savage remarked on the training of same-age peer employees; interactions she has witnessed are outstanding.

T. Easton: as a business owner he just wants to "give someone a chance." Businesses need to know it is fine to request a job coach/aide.

D. Shourbaji: it is important for businesses to know that these students bring *different* benefits to the businesses than other employees. Skills may be different, but still important and helpful. Hiring students and employees with disabilities "raises the whole morale of your workforce."

Workgroup Priorities

The workgroups met in October—community, education, and employment—to discuss priorities and begin focusing priorities. The goal now is to decide which one or two goals should be the focus of the current year's work.

M. Pecukonis discussed the Community Workgroup's priorities. Community / Adult Life – activities that will prepare the greater community for supporting people with disabilities; activities that will prepare people with disabilities and families for adult life, adult services, living in the community, etc.

A. Scholz discussed the Education Workgroup's priorities. Education – activities that will take place while students are still in high school, or in first years of community college, to prepare for life after high school.

R. Baynard discussed the Employment Workgroup's priorities. Employment – activities that will engage the business community; activities that will focus on employment skills.

The workgroup chairpersons will contact their group members to schedule future bi-monthly meetings.

B. Benevides will send the workgroup priority-setting notes to each Commission member. Members will be asked to give their opinion on the top one or two priorities for each subgroup.

Members agreed investment in the work of *all* groups and *across* groups is critical to Commission success.

Additional Business

B. Benevides reiterated her interest in publicizing the work of the Commission. K. Hyde suggested that once our Commission is properly housed in the new Office of the Local Children's Board we will have a greater connection to other commissions—new contacts.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.

Future Meetings:

All meetings will be held 8:30-10:30am at Columbia Gateway Building

January 12, 2017

March 9, 2017

May 11, 2017